

## Apaches: a History and Culture Portrait

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beginning of each chapter. These do not distract the reader and are generally helpful and interesting. In several places, in fact, explanatory notes would have been helpful, but were not included. Probably, those most interested in this collection would be persons already familiar with much of the history and lifestyles of the Five Civilized Tribes. Those having little knowledge about these groups may find many of the excerpts difficult to understand, although there are a few, such as those found in the chapter on economic development, which a noninformed reader would find interesting and entertaining. Perdue's collection contains fascinating, personalized accounts, which as a supplement to the ethnographies and histories we have about the Five Civilized Tribes, is informative and scholarly.

DENVER, CO

ERIN CHRISTENSEN

*Apaches: A History and Culture Portrait*, by James L. Haley. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1981. pp. xxi, 453. Photographs, maps, bibliography, index. \$17.95.

In recent decades most writers of popular books about Indians have tried to combine the disciplines of ethnology and history and to avoid simplistic explanations of complex issues. They have rejected the older approach, which made ethnology the domain of specialists and based tribal histories wholly on government records and other primary sources written by whites. Unfortunately, they have usually discovered that the amalgamation of ethnology and history produced an unstable compound in which one of the two disciplines emerged dominant.

James L. Haley has tried harder than most of his confreres, and he has succeeded better than most. By titling his book "A History and Culture Portrait," he has, in effect, challenged his readers to find defects in the finished product. That defects can be found does not seriously vitiate the result, for which no claim to perfection is made. Given the prodigious amount of writing that has been done on the Apaches, Haley recognized that the justification for yet another book about them must rest on the uniqueness of his treatment rather than on the introduction of any newly discovered information.

After a preface in which Haley lays his cards on the table and tries to strike a balance between the Old School (the Indians got what was coming to them) and the New School (European occupation of North America was an unmitigated disaster), he offers in Book One a series of chapters that alternate between tribal legends and standard history.

The historical layers of this club sandwich take the story up to the time of the Mexican War.

Book Two constitutes the "culture portrait" part of Haley's account and follows the standard ethnographic approach by treating such topics as material culture, tribal organization, religion, courtship and marriage, and the like. His strategy is to equip the reader with enough knowledge of Apache lifeways so that group and individual behavior in the historical part of the book will make more sense than it did to contemporaries or to those who have studied it since.

Book Three, which accounts for more than half the book, tells the familiar story of the conflict between the Apaches and white Americans in the last half of the nineteenth century. The special merit of this section derives from the application of the cultural background provided earlier and from the author's commonsense view that the personal ambitions and failings of individuals on both sides had as much to do with precipitating wars as the "forces of history."

If one discounts the extravagant claims made on the jacket and judges the book on its own merits, *Apaches* measures up very well in comparison with other recent tribal studies written for a general audience. Haley's scholarship is sound, his handling of the Indian-white conflict is balanced, and his writing is competent, often lively. Although he professes a low opinion of books that give undue emphasis to battles, Haley does quite as well at holding reader interest as such fictional portrayals of this warfare as Will Henry's *Chiricahua*.

No book is without faults, of course. There is a tendency, especially in the later chapters, to concentrate on the Chiricahua and Western Apaches and to ignore the Jicarilla and Mescalero branches of the tribe, who have been the subjects of fairly recent studies. And Haley has his heroes and his villains among both Indians and whites: Mangas Coloradas, Cochise, Victorio, General George Crook, and Agent John Clum are in the former category; Geronimo, Juh, General Nelson A. Miles, and some smaller fry in the latter.

Minor errors of fact creep in here and there; it was Charles Bent and not his brother William who served briefly as governor of New Mexico. And there are occasional stylistic infelicities and an unexplained substitution of "observed" for "absurd" (p. 372). But these faults are trivial. The photographs are superb and the maps are adequate; one wishes there were a table of contents for both, so that it wouldn't be necessary to flip through much of the book to find a picture or a map noted earlier. The index is as full as one could wish, and the bibliography is positively awesome. The notes are placed at

the end of each chapter—a better place for them than the end of the book but less helpful than the bottom of the page.

*Apaches* is Haley's second book, and he is said to be at work on a novel on the same subject. With all due respect to his talents as a writer of fiction, it is unlikely that the novel will be any better reading than this book.

MANKATO, MN

ROY W. MEYER

*Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State*, by Willis F. Dunbar. Revised by George S. May. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980. pp. xii, 833. Maps, suggestions for further reading, appendixes, index. \$24.95.

Since its publication in 1965, Willis Dunbar's opus has remained unchallenged as the most encompassing survey of Michigan's historical record. Before his death in 1970, Dunbar had revised and updated his book here and there, yet for some years it has needed a thorough reworking. Moreover, the book's widespread use in Michigan college and university classrooms, its popularity with the general public, and the absence of a more recent comparable study, make May's effort especially welcome. Finally, for all its strengths, Dunbar's book is flawed by repetitiveness, is sometimes ill-organized, and its richness of detail could turn away a less than determined reader.

To those familiar with George May's searching and lucid scholarship, his qualifications for this task go without saying—indeed, they should be drawn to this revision with high expectations. As a veteran teacher of Michigan history at Eastern Michigan University and the author of numerous books and articles on the subject, May's contributions to our understanding of Michigan's past easily approach those of Willis Dunbar and make this association especially fitting.

May has wisely retained much of the original text in the first half of the book and contented himself with well integrated revisions that leave the flow of Dunbar's narrative uninterrupted. The chronological arrangement is retained, too, but the focus is sharpened and the narrative strengthened by the addition of two chapters that include material deleted from two of Dunbar's chapters. Altogether, the pre-Civil War chapters emerge renovated, remodeled, and consistently improved.

The post-Civil War portion of the book bears May's stamp still more clearly in style, organization, and content. As one might expect,

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